MARVEL®
FREE CAN OF TANGO OFFER INSIDE!
22nd Oct. 88
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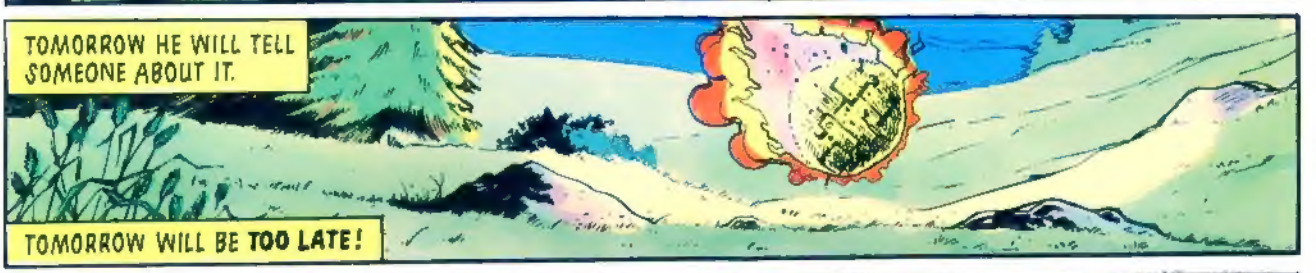
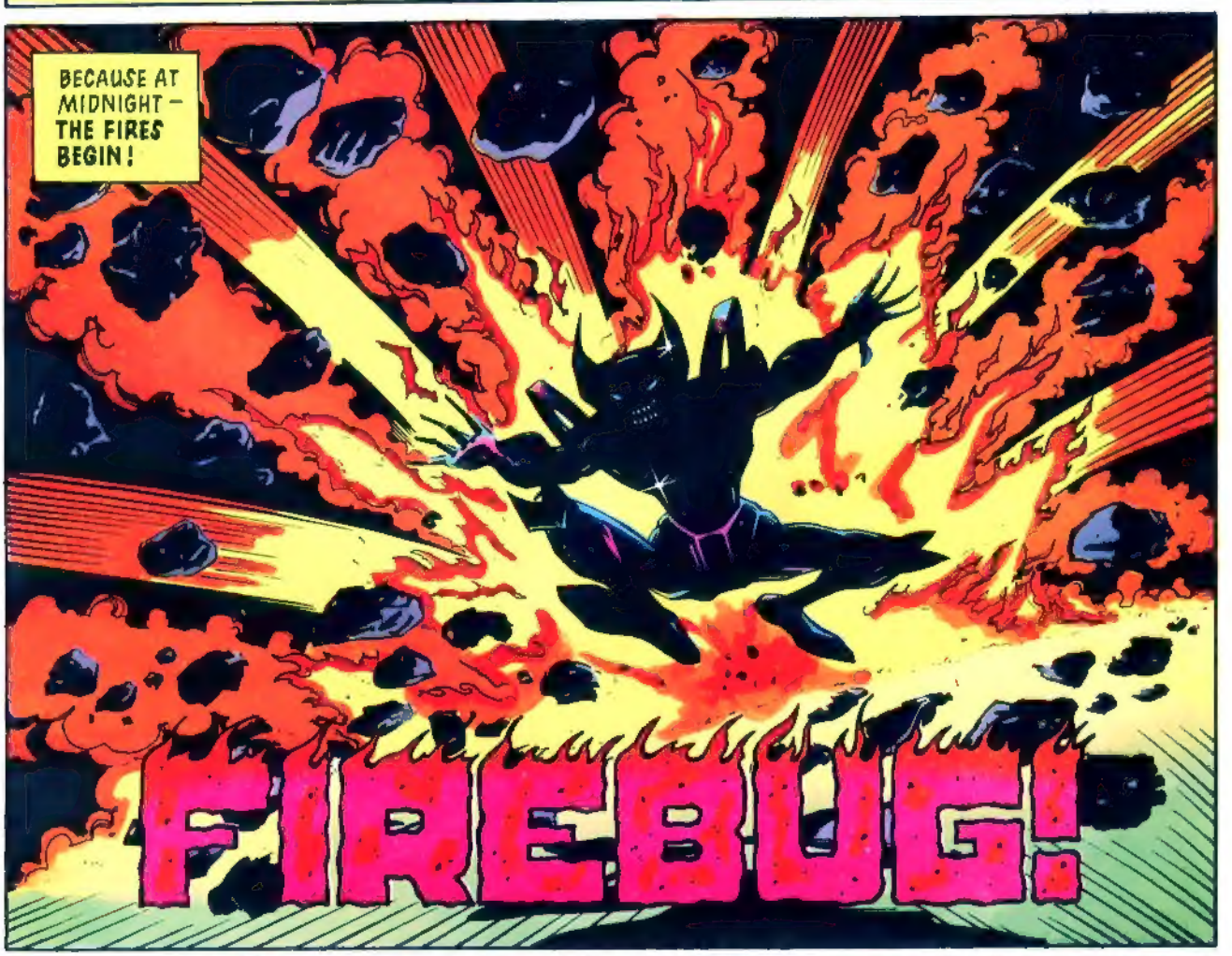
THE TRANSFORMERS™
and
VISIONARIES™
KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED, IT COULD BE ANYWHERE!

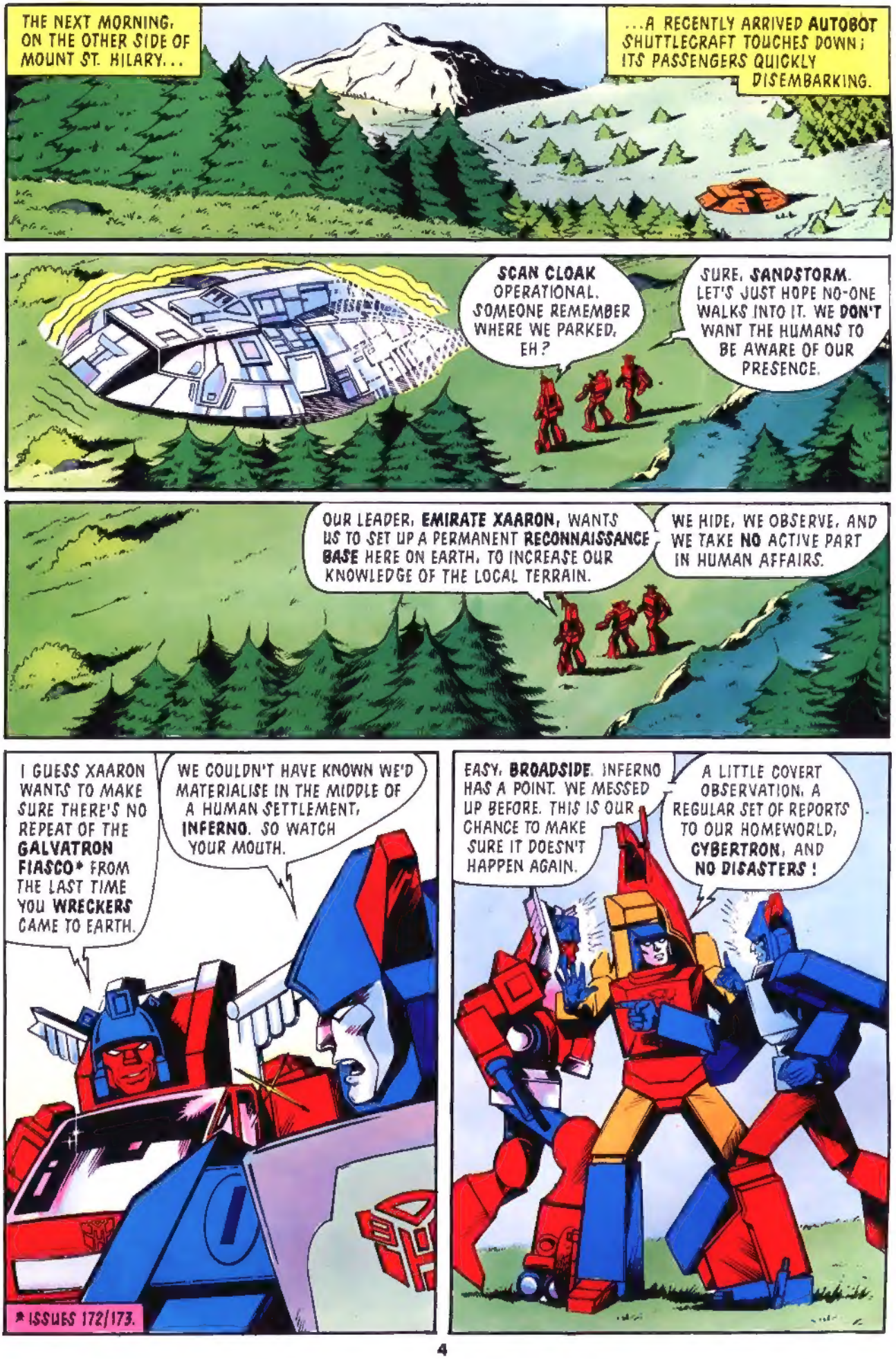
TRANSFORMERS™

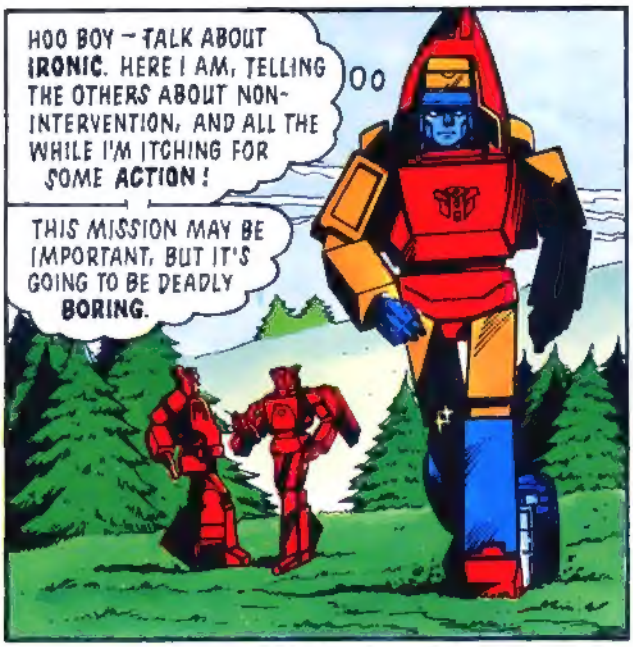
11.55 PM – THE NIGHT SKY ABOVE AMERICA.
NASA'S* RADARS ARE BLIND TO THE VISITOR. WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE LOOKS RIGHT THROUGH IT.
*NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION.



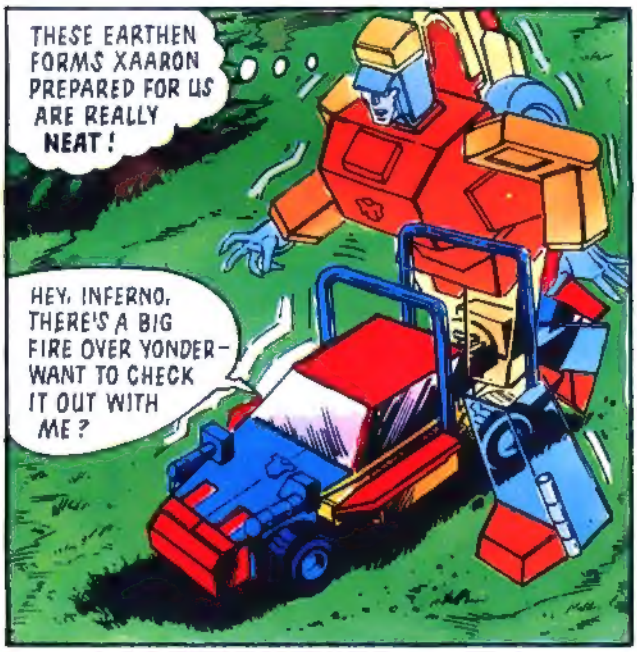


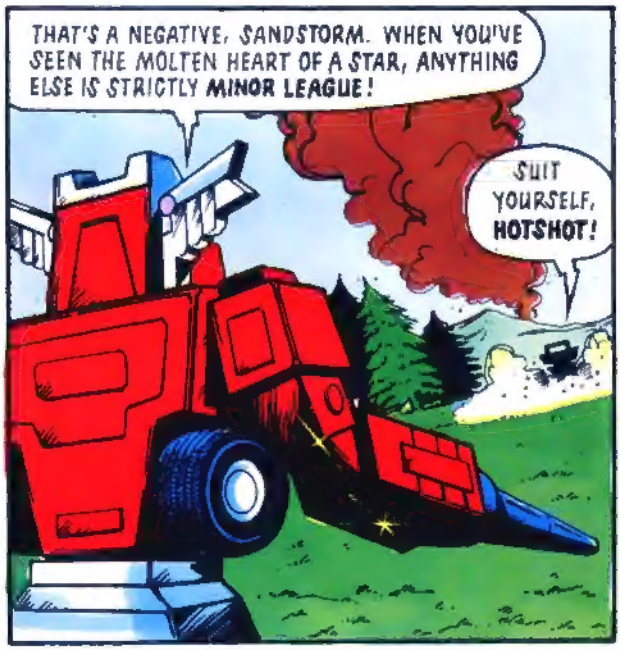
Plot SIMON FURMAN ■ Script DAN ABNETT ■ Art JEFF ANDERSON ■ Letters TOM FRAME ■ Colour EUAN PETERS


THE NEXT MORNING, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF MOUNT ST. HILARY...
...A RECENTLY ARRIVED AUTOBOT SHUTTLECRAFT TOUCHES DOWN; ITS PASSENGERS QUICKLY DISEMBARKING.
SCAN CLOAK OPERATIONAL. SOMEONE REMEMBER WHERE WE PARKED, EH?
SURE, SANDSTORM. LET'S JUST HOPE NO-ONE WALKS INTO IT. WE DON'T WANT THE HUMANS TO BE AWARE OF OUR PRESENCE.
OUR LEADER, EMIRATE XAARON, WANTS US TO SET UP A PERMANENT RECONNAISSANCE BASE HERE ON EARTH, TO INCREASE OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOCAL TERRAIN.
WE HIDE, WE OBSERVE, AND WE TAKE NO ACTIVE PART IN HUMAN AFFAIRS.
I GUESS XAARON WANTS TO MAKE SURE THERE'S NO REPEAT OF THE GALVATRON FIASCO* FROM THE LAST TIME YOU WRECKERS CAME TO EARTH.
WE COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN WE'D MATERIALISE IN THE MIDDLE OF A HUMAN SETTLEMENT, INFERNO. SO WATCH YOUR MOUTH.
* ISSUES 172/173.
EASY, BROADSIDE. INFERNO HAS A POINT. WE MESSED UP BEFORE. THIS IS OUR CHANCE TO MAKE SURE IT DOESN'T HAPPEN AGAIN.
A LITTLE COVERT OBSERVATION, A REGULAR SET OF REPORTS TO OUR HOMEWORLD, CYBERTRON, AND NO DISASTERS!


HOO BOY – TALK ABOUT IRONIC. HERE I AM, TELLING THE OTHERS ABOUT NON-INTERVENTION, AND ALL THE WHILE I'M ITCHING FOR SOME ACTION!
THIS MISSION MAY BE IMPORTANT, BUT IT'S GOING TO BE DEADLY BORING.

WAIT JUST A MINUTE! LOOKS LIKE A BIG FIRE OVER YONDER. JUST THE SORT OF THING I SHOULD BE... ER, OBSERVING.
I'LL JUST CHANGE INTO SOMETHING MORE COMFORTABLE AND GO TAKE A LOOK.


THESE EARTHEN FORMS XAARON PREPARED FOR US ARE REALLY NEAT!
HEY, INFERNO, THERE'S A BIG FIRE OVER YONDER – WANT TO CHECK IT OUT WITH ME?


THAT'S A NEGATIVE, SANDSTORM. WHEN YOU'VE SEEN THE MOLTEN HEART OF A STAR, ANYTHING ELSE IS STRICTLY MINOR LEAGUE!
SUIT YOURSELF, HOTSHOT!

SHORTLY...
GEEZ – THE WHOLE TOWN'S ABLAZE. THESE PEOPLE NEED HELP!
I'D BETTER GET AN OVERALL VIEW OF THE SITUATION...

...FROM THE AIR! BEING A TRIPLE-CHANGER DEFINITELY HAS ITS ADVANTAGES!
LOOKS BAD!
SANDSTORM TO BROADSIDE. THERE'S A MAJOR CONFLAGRATION AT GRID REF: ZODIAC THREE. ASSISTANCE REQUIRED AS SOON AS POSS—
HEY! WHAT THE DEVIL WAS THAT?
GONE! MAYBE I JUST IMAGINED IT...
BROADSIDE TO SANDSTORM. RETURN TO BASE. I REPEAT. RETURN TO BASE.
WHAT? YOU ROWING WITH ALL OARS IN THE WATER, BROADSIDE? THE HUMANS NEED OUR HELP!
THAT'S RICH, SANDSTORM...
...COMING FROM SOMEONE WHO WAS STRESSING THE NEED FOR NON-INTERVENTION EARLIER! I'M SURE INFERNO WILL BACK ME UP ON THIS ONE!
WELL...

NO! WHATEVER OUR ORDERS ARE, AS AUTOBOTS WE'RE STILL COMMITTED TO THE PROTECTION AND SALVATION OF ALL LIFEFORMS – EVERYWHERE!
AND THAT INCLUDES HERE ON EARTH! BUT AS TEAM-LEADER, BROADSIDE, YOU HAVE TO CHOOSE!
HECK – WHY DO I HAVE TO MAKE THESE SORT OF DECISIONS?
OHH...
WE– WE'RE ON OUR WAY, SANDSTORM. BUT IF XAARON ASKS...
YOU WERE CERTAIN YOU SAW GALVATRON THERE, OKAY?
AND, MOMENTS LATER...
GEE – SANDSTORM WASN'T EXAGGERATING, INFERNO. IT DOES LOOK BAD!
AHH, THERE'S BAD AND THERE'S BAD, BROADSIDE. THIS ISN'T ANYTHING I CAN'T HANDLE!

SOON...
LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT THE WORST OF THE BLAZE UNDER CONTROL!
I RECKON SO. FUNNY THING IS...
...I JUST CAN'T SEEM TO GET THIS FIRE TO GO OUT!
IT'S ALMOST AS IF SOMETHING WAS —
BROADSIDE! GET AWAY FROM THERE! IN THE FLAMES... IT LOOKS LIKE —

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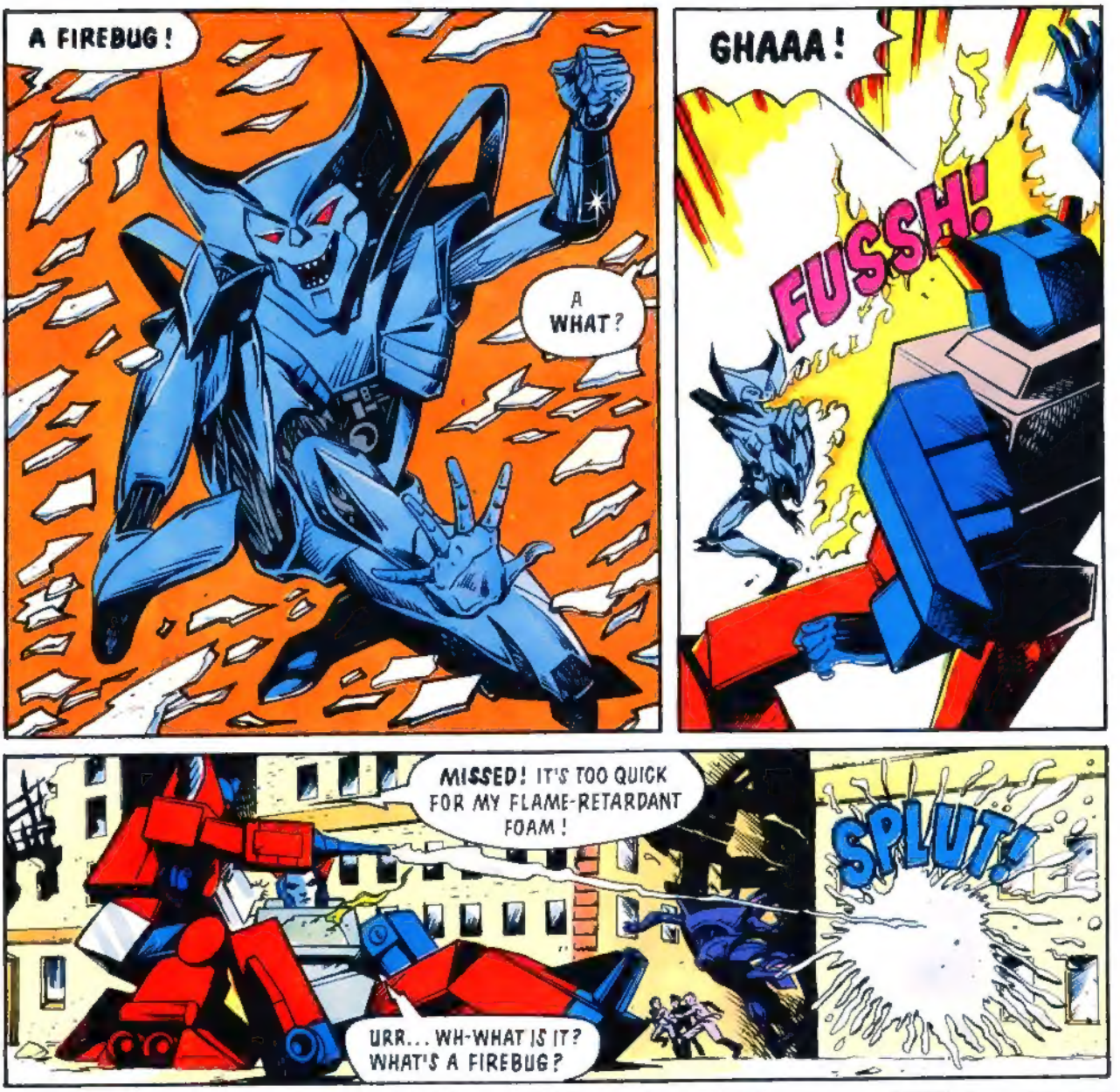
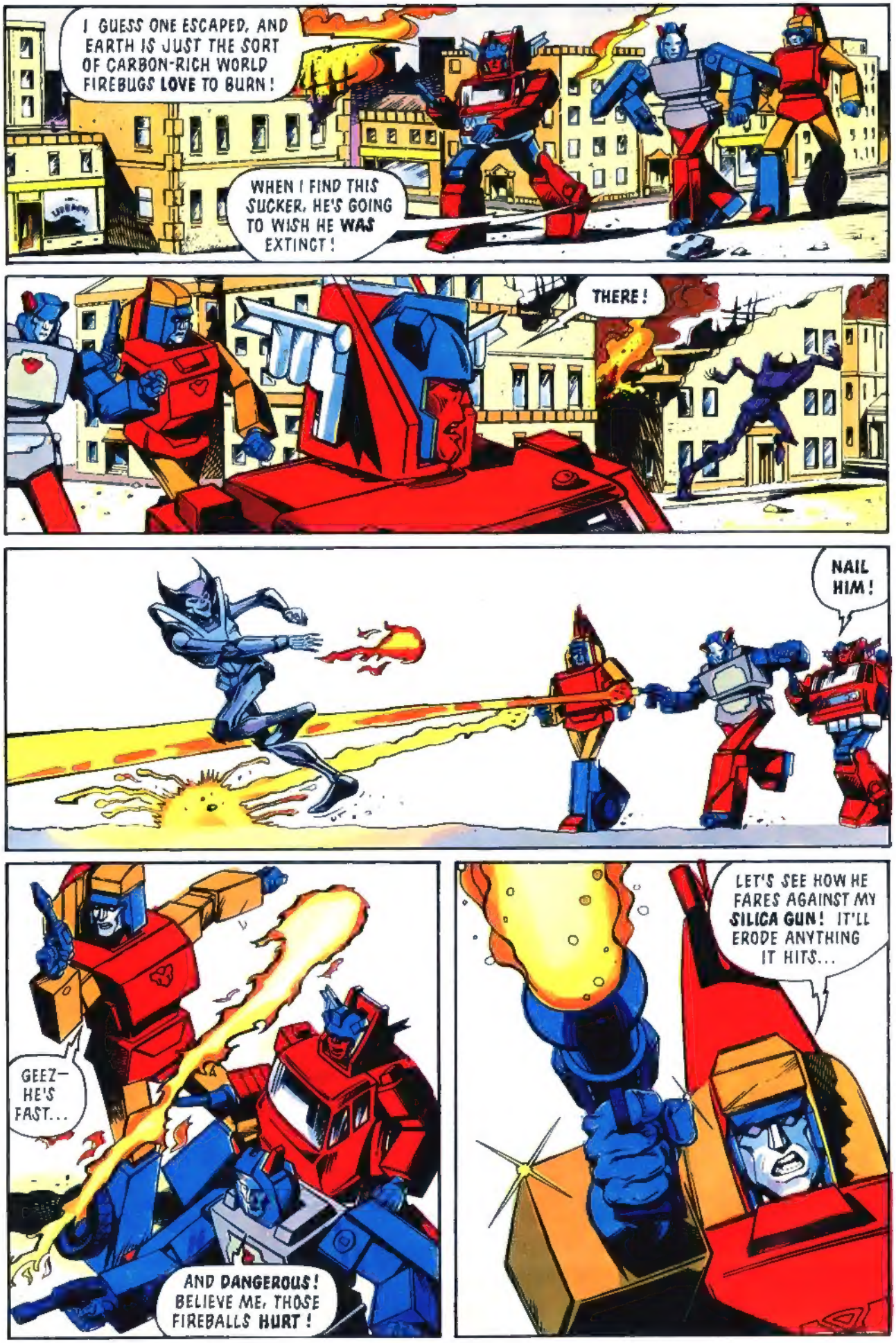
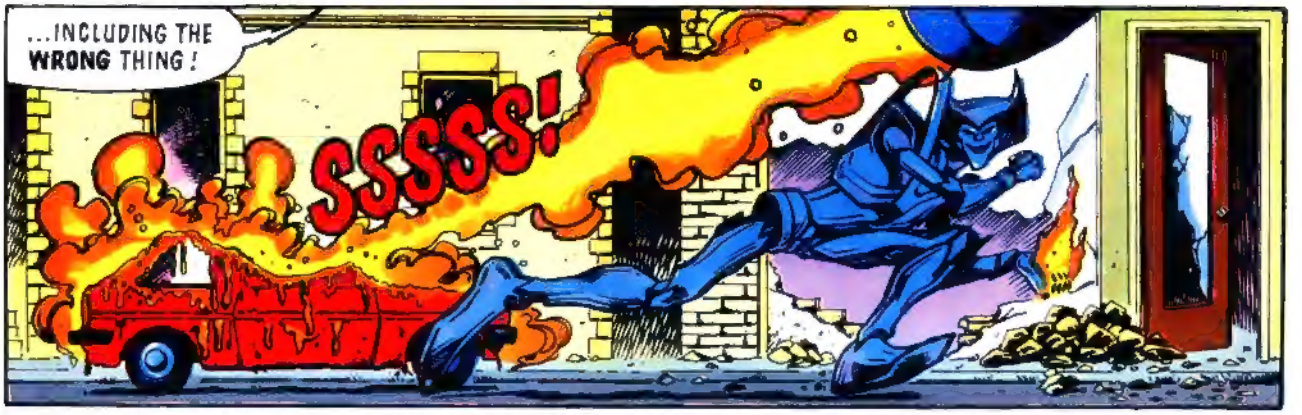
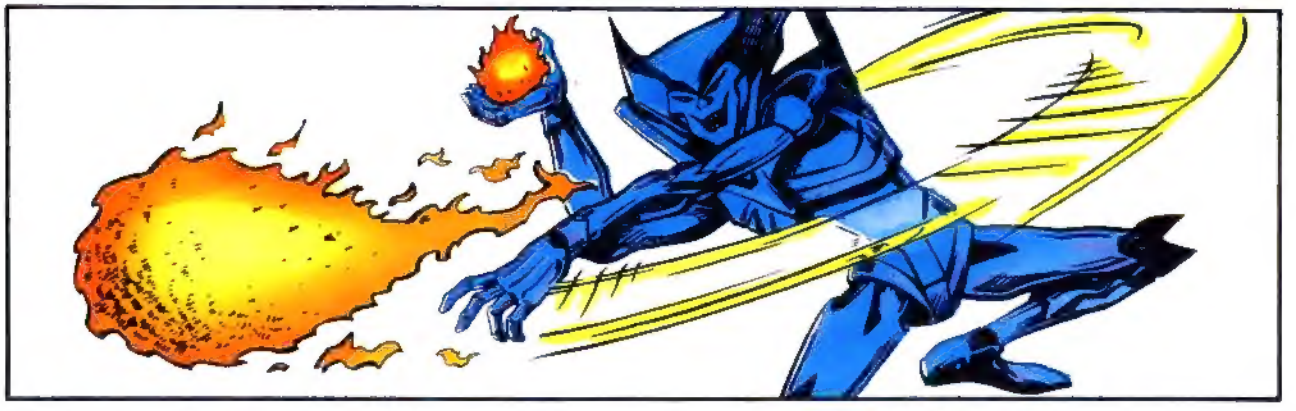
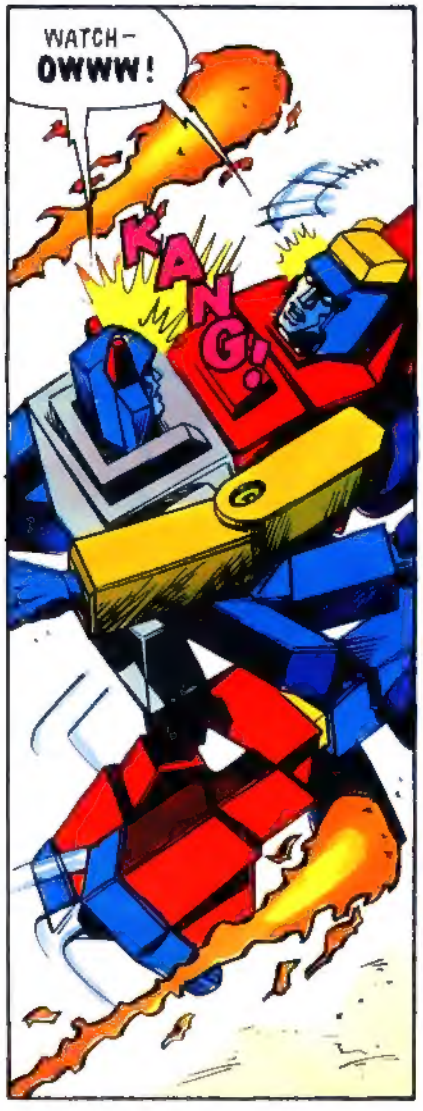
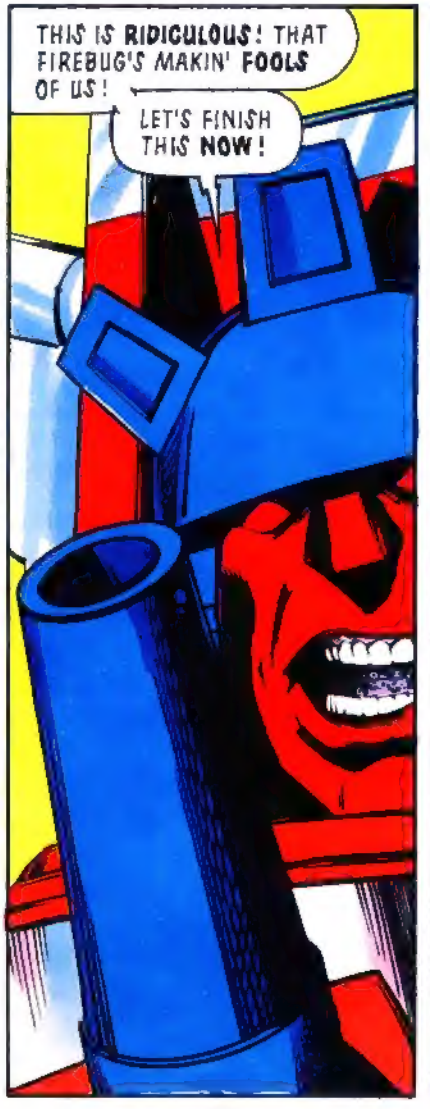

A FIREBUG!
A WHAT?
GHAAA!
FUSSH!
MISSED! IT'S TOO QUICK FOR MY FLAME-RETARDANT FOAM!
SPLUT!
URR... WH-WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S A FIREBUG?
A NATIVE OF THE PLANET FURNACIA. FIREBUGS ARE LETHAL LITTLE CRITTERS THAT FEED ON HIGH TEMPERATURES AND COMBUST MATTER.
"THEY'VE BEEN A NOMADIC RACE SINCE THEIR HOMEWORLD BURNT ITSELF OUT. LAST I HEARD, MOST OF THEIR NUMBER LANDED ON THE ICE WORLD OF THESSIN..."
...WITH PREDICTABLY DISASTROUS RESULTS. FOR THEM, ANYWAY! I THOUGHT THEY WERE ALL BUT EXTINCT THESE DAYS!

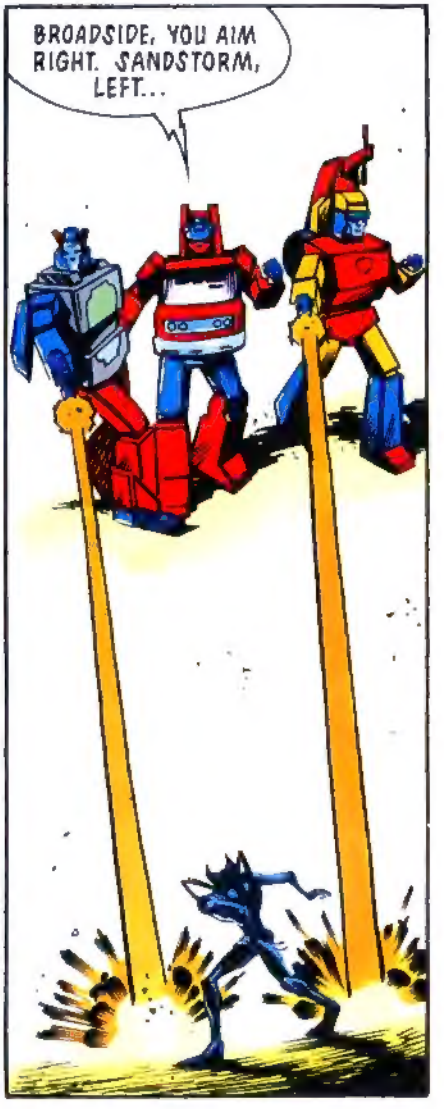

I GUESS ONE ESCAPED, AND EARTH IS JUST THE SORT OF CARBON-RICH WORLD FIREBUGS LOVE TO BURN!
WHEN I FIND THIS SUCKER, HE'S GOING TO WISH HE WAS EXTINCT!
THERE!
NAIL HIM!
GEEZ— HE'S FAST...
AND DANGEROUS! BELIEVE ME, THOSE FIREBALLS HURT!
LET'S SEE HOW HE FARES AGAINST MY SILICA GUN! IT'LL ERODE ANYTHING IT HITS...


...INCLUDING THE WRONG THING!
SSSSS!

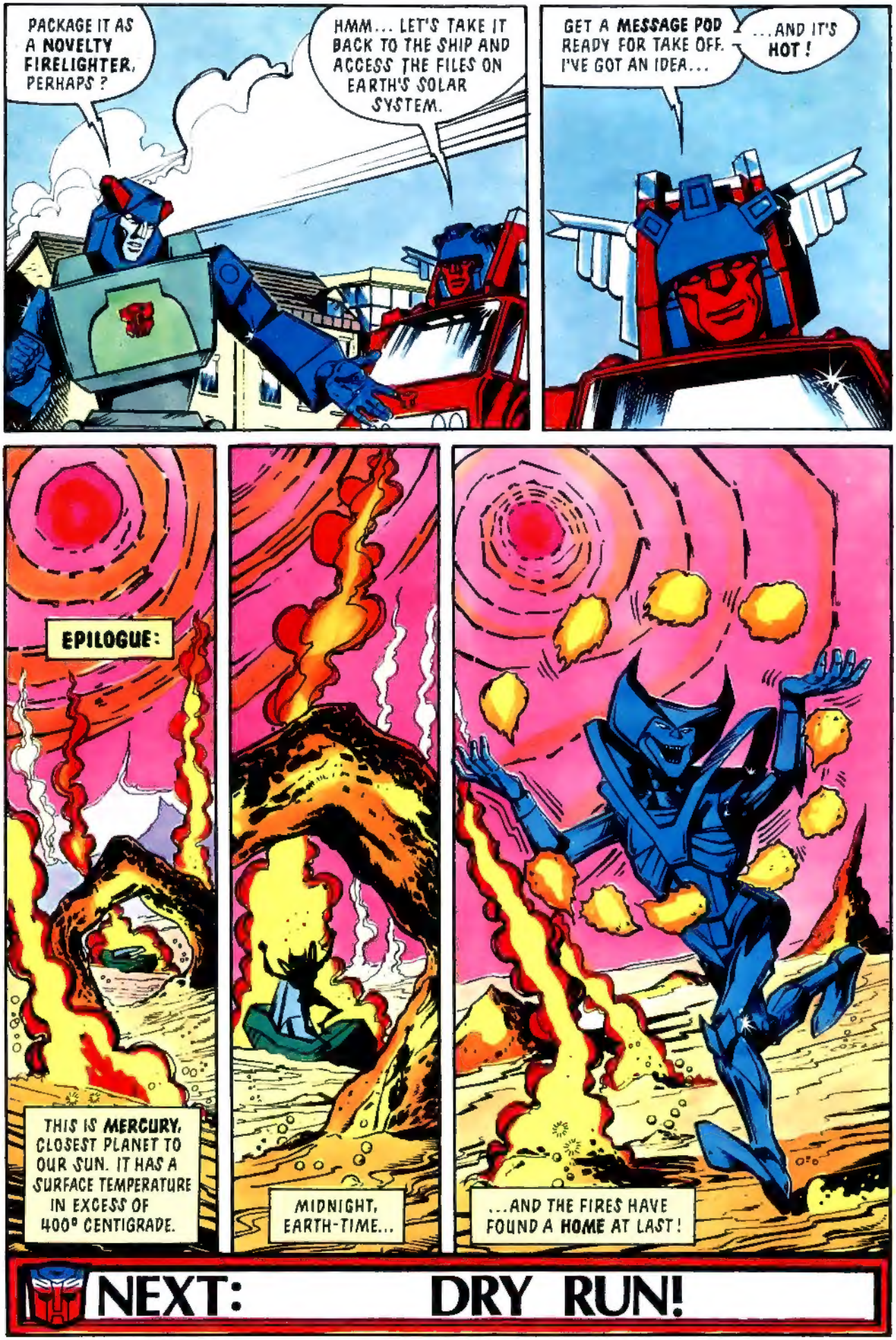



WATCH—
OWWW!
KANG!


THIS IS RIDICULOUS! THAT FIREBUG'S MAKIN' FOOLS OF US!
LET'S FINISH THIS NOW!


BROADSIDE, YOU AIM RIGHT. SANDSTORM, LEFT...

...AND I'LL AIM DEAD CENTRE!
UNDERSTAND THIS, FIREBUG...
...SMOKING IS NOT PERMITTED!
FLUDGE!
GOOD. NOW, LET'S FINISH THE LITTLE CREEP OFF!
WHOA THERE, BROADSIDE. THE FIREBUG MAY BE AN ANNOYING LITTLE PEST...
BOY, YOU SAID IT!
...BUT WE'RE NOT MURDERERS!
WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST THEN?


PACKAGE IT AS A NOVELTY FIRELIGHTER, PERHAPS ?
HMM... LET'S TAKE IT BACK TO THE SHIP AND ACCESS THE FILES ON EARTH'S SOLAR SYSTEM.
GET A MESSAGE POD READY FOR TAKE OFF. I'VE GOT AN IDEA...
...AND IT'S HOT !
EPILOGUE:
THIS IS MERCURY, CLOSEST PLANET TO OUR SUN. IT HAS A SURFACE TEMPERATURE IN EXCESS OF 400° CENTIGRADE.
MIDNIGHT, EARTH-TIME...
...AND THE FIRES HAVE FOUND A HOME AT LAST!
NEXT: DRY RUN!